

Independent Study of Redevelopment in Long Beach

Community Meeting Summary

Meeting Date:	Wednesday, February 2, 2005
Location:	Silverado Park Community Center, 1545 W. 31 st Street, Long Beach, California
Attendance:	Approximately 75 people
Prepared by:	Anthony Crump, Consensus Planning Group

Introduction

A community meeting was conducted on Wednesday, February 2, 2005 at the Silverado Park Community Center in Long Beach. The community meeting was held in an open house format from approximately 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The meeting was designed to introduce the purpose, scope and timetable for the Independent Study to the general public and to obtain insight about additional issues and concerns the community may have about redevelopment in the City of Long Beach. A secondary purpose was to provide basic information about California redevelopment to those not familiar with redevelopment in general.

Public Notification

A color community meeting invitation was produced in English, Spanish and Khmer by Consensus Planning Group. A supporting postcard and written summaries were produced to augment the formal invitation. With the assistance of Redevelopment Agency staff, invitations were distributed to residents, churches, community organizations, city staff, and interested parties through a variety of outreach activities, including:

- Mailed invitation to approximately 750 residents, churches and community organizations
- Mailed a reminder postcard to approximately 750 residents, churches and community organizations
- Faxed and hand delivered invitations to the Main Library and all branch libraries
- Hand delivered and posted invitations at 16 community and recreation centers
- Hand delivered and posted invitations at the United Cambodian Community, Khmer Cultural Center, Cambodian Association of America, and the Cambodian Buddhist Temple
- E-mailed the invitation to over 1500 email addresses on the City's e-mail notification list
- Posted the meeting invitation in the Long Beach Business Journal Community Calendar
- Placed a Public Service Announcement on LBTW Channel 8
- Placed a one-quarter page advertisement in the Long Beach Press-Telegram
- Distributed a community notice and invitation to community based and traditional media outlets in the City of Long Beach
- Placed the invitation in English and Spanish on the project web site
- Provided a verbal update on the project hotline in English and Spanish

Public Information Materials

Public information materials were produced to encourage constructive dialogue and facilitate communication between the project team and the general public. Materials were produced in English and Spanish and made available at the welcome/sign-in table and individual stations throughout the meeting. Two Spanish translators and one Khmer translator were available to assist community members that were more comfortable in those languages. Handouts and boards distributed at the meeting included:

- Overview of California Redevelopment
- Overview of the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency
- Redevelopment Project Areas Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Definitions of Success for the Independent Study of Redevelopment
- Public Comment and Feedback Forms
- How to Get Involved in the Independent Study

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Attendees

Approximately 79 people attended the community meeting throughout the evening. Among the attendees were four Long Beach City Council Members and several RDA Board Members. Approximately 13 people identified themselves as being affiliated with a local Project Area Committee.

Public Comments and Feedback

A large comment table was provided for attendees to provide written comments on English or Spanish comments sheets. After writing their comments, attendees could leave them in the sealed comment box, hand them to staff members, or mail them to the address provided on the bottom of the comment form. Approximately 30 written comments were received at the meeting. Listed below are several of the more commonly received comments. Not intended to be an exhaustive response to each and every comment, this list is provided to give a general sense of the issues most frequently raised.

Comments on Redevelopment and the Independent Study

- Information Needed – Several comments indicated a desire to learn more about how redevelopment occurs in Long Beach.
- Specific Project Opportunities – Some comments requested more information about possible future redevelopment opportunities (such as transit-oriented development), or potential Redevelopment Agency support for redevelopment of specific private properties.
- Focusing on the Big Projects – Some comments indicated that the Redevelopment Agency should focus less on “the big guys” and focus more on small property owners and their projects.
- Areas of Need -- Several comments stated that the areas of greatest need, notably North Long Beach (and sometimes West Long Beach) have either no projects or very few redevelopment projects.
- Supporting Governance Change – Some commentators stated their support of the proposal for the City Council to assume Redevelopment Agency Board duties, and felt their area of the city would receive more attention if that happened.
- Opposing Governance Change – Other stated their opposition of the proposal for the City Council to assume Redevelopment Agency Board duties, and felt their areas would receive less attention if that occurred.
- Failure to Listen to Project Area Committees – Some comments indicated that input from PACs is not taken seriously, and that the role of PACs is not acknowledged in project publicity or at project openings.
- Measuring Benefits of Projects – Some comments indicated that the Independent Study should measure the benefits of redevelopment projects and impacts in surrounding areas.
- Supporting Performance Audit -- Some comments encouraged a thorough performance audit of the Redevelopment Agency, as well as individual assessments of projects.
- Support for Long Beach – Several comments indicated excitement about the future of the City.

Comments on the Public Open House Format

- Support – Several comments said the meeting was helpful and that staff and consultants listened to their concerns.
- Meeting format - Several comments stated displeasure with the open house format and expressed a preference for a formal presentation.
- Outreach – Some comments supported the need for broad outreach to ensure that participation is not limited to the organizations and individuals who have been involved in the past.
- Language – Several comments stated that Spanish language materials were not available.

As shown above, the comments received represented a wide range of issues and perspectives. Substantive comments will be referred to throughout the remainder of the Independent Study effort. Comments about the open house format will be reflected in the design of future public input events.